

**FORUM:** United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO)

**QUESTION OF:** Discussing the effects of tourism on Small Island Developing States

**SUBMITTED BY:** The State of Israel

**CO-SUBMITTED BY:** Australia, France, Greece, Hungary, Malta, Netherlands, Portugal, Ukraine

THE WORLD TOURISM ORGANIZATION,

*Recalling* the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which emphasizes the need for sustainable tourism, especially in Small Island Developing States (SIDSs), as part of Goal 14 (Sustainable Use of the Ocean) and Goal 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth),

*Aware of* the fact that SIDSs face unique challenges, like limited natural resources, small economies, and geographic isolation,

*Concerned* about the environmental, social, and economic issues these regions face because of tourism such as environmental damage, vulnerability to climate change and loss of cultural heritage,

*Reaffirming* the need for a balanced and integrated approach to tourism development that fosters both economic growth and environmental protection,

*Conscious* of the challenges posed by climate change, particularly sea level rise, extreme weather events, and loss of biodiversity, which affects SIDSs,

*Acknowledging* the fact that Small Island Developing states largely rely economically on tourism,

*Expressing its satisfaction* with the Fourth International Conference on Small Island Developing States held in May 2024,

1. Proposes the creation of a database by travel agencies in collaboration with the Governments of SIDSs that states how many people can visit a country in a specific period of time, thus allowing them to monitor and limit the number of tourists allowed to enter the country in order to:
  - a) prevent overcrowding and mass tourism, thus lowering the demand for accommodation and other such services, in an attempt to:
    - i. prevent the intervention of multinational corporations such as large hotel chains in this sector,
    - ii. allow small local businesses to thrive in the absence of such corporations, considering that the smaller number of tourists will be easier for these businesses to handle without having to rely on multinational companies,
    - iii. ensure that tourism is financially helping small and medium-sized enterprises rather than established and successful multinational corporations,
  - b) simplify the environmental protection process in SIDSs, considering that:
    - i. emissions from means of transportation would be significantly lowered,
    - ii. the monitorization and the enforcement of measures regarding the protection of at-risk areas would become easier for authorities;
2. Encourages the funding and promotion of cultural tourism in SIDSs in order to uplift local businesses and conserve the heritage and culture of local populations, by means such as:
  - a) constructing and funding museums and cultural centers,
  - b) funding the preservation of historical sights and artifacts,
  - c) increasing international awareness of SIDSs' history and cultural heritage,
  - d) including key landmarks from every small island state in UNESCO World Heritage designations, preserving cultural heritage while empowering local communities through tourism,

- e) investing in infrastructure in an attempt to conserve culture through architecture and make SIDSs more culturally appealing to tourists;
3. Calls for the imposition and enforcement of strict regulations regarding sustainability and environmental conservation, such as:
- a) introducing measures to prevent overbooking and overcrowding, such as limiting the hours of operation of protected areas,
  - b) creating database which includes a set number of spots stating how many people are allowed to enter the area at a certain time, as well as the specific people taking up those spots,
  - c) increasing protection and monitorization of at-risk areas,
  - d) limiting or restricting access to certain endangered areas in extreme cases;
4. Advocates for a UN Environmental Fund dedicated to SIDSs, supporting sustainable tourism practices and low-impact accommodations to protect fragile environments using methods such as the encouragement of local involvement, so neighborhood businesses get more customers or create economic activity independent of tourism;
5. Supports government-controlled elevation of taxes for people who own properties and only inhabit them temporarily or visit them for tourism purposes in contrast to permanent residents in an attempt to:
- a) prevent effects such as the displacement of locals,
  - b) encourage tourists to support local accommodation businesses,
  - c) improve housing and economic conditions in areas that are gentrified due to tourism;
6. Endorses economic development through sustainable tourism by:
- a) defining sustainable tourism and focusing on minimizing the negative impact on the environment,
  - b) generating significant profit for local communities, especially those with natural beauty and cultural attractions,

- c) supporting local businesses by buying locally-produced products,
  - d) creating a local market with high-quality products to help local prosperity,
  - e) investing in infrastructure by advancing connectivity and infrastructure;
7. Recommends the safeguarding of local cultures, traditions, and heritage sites, by promoting initiatives such as:
- a) regenerating cities and regions through the promotion of cultural heritage,
  - b) promoting adaptive reuse of heritage buildings,
  - c) balancing access to cultural heritage with sustainable cultural tourism and natural heritage;
8. Further supports local community participation in tourism planning and decision-making to ensure benefits and social inclusion by:
- a) emphasizing the advertisement local companies or collaborating with tourism and traveling companies,
  - b) ensuring that community members are kept informed of tourism development through regular updates.